



THE PAÏSOS CATALANS FORM PART OF THE DEVELOPED WORLD AND ARE AREAS OF GREAT ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN ALL SECTORS. OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, CATALONIA'S ECONOMY HAS GROWN CONSIDERABLY, AFFECTING NOT ONLY INDUSTRY, THE SECTOR MOST FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH CATALAN PRODUCTION, BUT ALSO FARMING AND FISHERIES. THE ARTICLES THAT FOLLOW LOOK AT VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THIS NEW REALITY, SUCH AS BASIC FIGURES FOR THE AGRARIAN SECTOR, WINE AND "CAVA" PRODUCTION, THE PROGRAMME OF PROTECTED MARITIME ZONES, FISH FARMING, ORNAMENTAL PLANTS AND FLOWERS, THE WORK OF THE "INSTITUT DE RECERCA I TECNOLOGIA AGROALIMENTÀRIES", THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION NETWORK, AND THE CREATION OF QUALITY CONTROL MECHANISMS.

BASIC FIGURES FOR THE AGRARIAN SECTOR IN CATALONIA



THE RESTORATION OF HOME-RULE IN CATALONIA AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL AGRARIAN ADMINISTRATION IN TUNE WITH THE SECTOR'S NEEDS AND INTERESTS HAVE BEEN A BREAKTHROUGH FOR CATALAN AGRICULTURE. PRODUCTIVITY HAS INCREASED AND THE DIFFERENCE IN RELATION TO THE OTHER SECTORS HAS BEEN REDUCED.

JOSEP MIRÓ I ARDEVOL COUNCILLOR FOR AGRICULTURE, FARMING AND FISHERIES, GENERALITAT DE CATALUNYA.



Catalonia is a nation with an economic base and a culture which are essentially industrial. In the 19th century, the country underwent extensive industrialization, similar and parallel to the process which took place in other parts of Europe, such as Britain. As we approach the end of the 20th century, Catalonia has a modern, varied industry, and its economy has a rapidly growing tertiary sector (tourism, finance, research, design, communications, culture, etc.).

Catalonia is also a nation with an agrarian component. Quantitatively, the figures are small: 95,000 people employed in the sector and an overall production of 386,923.8 million pesetas in 1987. Qualitatively, though, they are very important. First of all, because behind them there is a range of human activities which, over and above their economic significance, involve the defence and the preservation of the land, of our natural environment. Secondly, because if we compare them with the figures for other regions, they point to a great adaptation on the part of the farmers and breeders of Catalonia to the financial demands of today (rationality, productivity and competition).

Catalonia's agrarian sector occupies a position above the average for the European Community. If we take as our indicator the yield per person employed in the sector, we arrive at a value of 113.2 against an index of 100 for the whole of the European Community. This places us between France (103.1) and Luxembourg (114.1). If we take the active agrarian population as a percentage of the total active population, it gives us a figure of 68.4 %, putting Catalonia between Germany (63.8 %) and Denmark (81.9 %).

The restoration of home-rule in Catalonia and the establishment of a national agrarian administration in tune with the sector's needs and interests and always working in collaboration with the sector has been a breakthrough for Catalan agriculture. Productivity has increased substantially and the difference in rela-

tion to other sectors, to be expected in any developed economy, has been reduced.

Taking productivity as the ratio between the Gross Added Value and the number of people employed in the agrarian sector, this figure increased by 147 % between 1981 and 1987, in spite of the price crises of the last few years in such key products as pork. If we compare this figure to that corresponding to the economy as a whole (GNP per employed person), Catalonia has gone from 43.1 to 60.2 in the same period. In this way, Catalan agriculture is developing away from the traditional Mediterranean model and is now more in line with the agriculture of more balanced countries in this respect, such as Holland, Denmark, Belgium or the United Kingdom.

The composition of our agrarian sector confirms this. The overall agrarian production of Catalonia is distributed as follows: 60 % from livestock, 36.5 % from agriculture, and the rest, 3.5 %, from forestry and other lesser activities. Livestock production is the most important economic subsector and is characterized by its high standards in three aspects: its genetic quality, its sanitary quality and the quality of the exploitation techniques. This is a result of action on the part of Catalonia's national agrarian administration and of the stock-farmers and their organizations, and has led to such successes as the total eradication of African swine-fever, a genuine endemic of the Iberian Peninsula, and the complete absence of horse-pox. Our stock-farmers are also fully attuned to the needs of the market and the consumers. Three groups of products make up the overwhelming majority of the sector: pork, which accounts for almost half our livestock production; farm products (poultry, rabbits, eggs, etc.), over a quarter, and beef and milk, 20 % of production. Other products (e.g. mutton, goat and horse) play a lesser part.

Our agriculture offers much greater variety, ranging from typically Medi-

terranean products, such as citruses, nuts, oil, wine, garden produce or flowers to others which are clearly continental, such as cereals and pasture. This is due partly to the close proximity of large consumer centres (Barcelona especially, but also other European urban areas with which there is good communication) and partly to the input demand from stock-farming.

The most important group of products are the fruits (pears, apples, peaches, cherries, citruses, etc.), which make up 35 % of Catalan agricultural production. Next comes garden produce, vegetables and products of value, such as lettuces, tomatoes, onions and many others, which make up 21.5 % of the total production although they only account for 3 % of cultivated land in Catalonia. Cereals make up 20 % of our production. It is worth noting that, during the eighties, the production of fruit, vegetables and ornamental plants and flowers has increased steadily and spectacularly.

So far, I have described Catalonia's agrarian sector in the strictest sense of the word, as part of the primary sector of an economic system, following the academic classifications in use. Obviously, though, in a developed economy like our own, there is an increasing tendency to look on the agro-alimentary sector as a whole, including in it the entire production chain, farms and the industrial transformation of their products. From this viewpoint, agriculture and farming is a basic sector within Catalonia's economic system. To be precise, it occupies third place as regards the working population (immediately behind the commercial sector and public services) and sixth as regards its contribution to the GNP, behind the two mentioned above and the credit and insurance sector, transport and communications, and metallic products and machinery. It is therefore obvious that Catalonia, in spite of her industrial base, is clearly a nation with an agricultural past and present. ●